

1918—



—1947

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FOREIGN POLICY BULLETIN

An interpretation of current international events by the Research Staff of the Foreign Policy Association

FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION, Incorporated

22 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

VOL. XXVI, No. 14

JANUARY 17, 1947

MARSHALL RAISES ISSUE OF SUPPORTING LIBERALS ABROAD

THE historic significance of General Marshall's thoughtful statement of January 7 is that it points out, in terms of the current situation in China, both the fundamental problem facing the United States abroad, and the attitude we should take toward this problem. Practically every nation, in varying degree, is divided—in some instances to the breaking-point—between extremists of the Right, whether they be labeled modern Fascists or old-fashioned reactionaries, and extremists of the Left, whether they be unquestioning adherents of Moscow or revolutionaries inspired by personal experience to seek local remedies for local maladjustments. The majority of the American people, by temper and tradition, do not want either form of extremism at home, and find both unpalatable abroad. The suppression of political freedom in Poland has been criticized here as vigorously as the suppression of political freedom in Spain and Argentina—although by no means always by the same people. There has been a marked tendency, however, to view dictatorial regimes in the area regarded as Russia's sphere of influence with considerably more apprehension than comparable regimes in the areas that come within the sphere of influence of Britain and the United States. And on many occasions since the end of the war this country has given the impression that, in order to check Communism or Russia or both, it might lend its support to extremists of the Right, by-passing the moderate groups whom General Marshall in the case of China describes as liberals.

WHO ARE THE LIBERALS? In all fairness, it must be said that American officials have been faced with three major difficulties in seeking to chart a middle course in international affairs. First, and perhaps most important of all, the majority of the American people, in spite of a predilection for bold

experimentation in industrial development unmatched in the world, are inclined to be fearful or suspicious of political and economic changes in other nations, especially changes that appear to challenge the concept of free private enterprise. This apprehensive attitude is due, in large part, to lack of knowledge concerning the historic development of people outside our borders, which causes many of us to assume that conditions in Russia, or China, or to take a country more akin in tradition, Britain, are comparable to our own. As a result, reforms in other nations which in terms of local experience are not only desirable but often long overdue are regarded here as dangerously revolutionary, and some Americans look with as much distaste on liberals and Socialists as they do on Communists.

The second obstacle to clarification of our policy is that in many countries the groups we might regard as liberals are small in number and, while usually rich in gifts of intellect and integrity, are poor in material power and political experience, and often divided among themselves. In countries like Russia in 1917 or China, Hungary, or Argentina today, the middle class, seedbed of liberalism, is still too limited—due to the lag in industrialization, growth of urban communities and general education or even literacy—to form a stable balance wheel between extremism of Right and Left. The United States is therefore confronted with the grave question whether, by supporting "liberals" in a given country, it may be backing a lost cause, and thereby strengthening one or the other of the extremes.

The third difficulty is the mental confusion induced by the tendency to identify any trend "to the left" with Russia. This tendency causes many Americans to believe that the Russians are responsible for unrest wherever it occurs, without inquiring into

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the possibility that such unrest might be inspired by local conditions whose causes antedate Lenin, and even Karl Marx. It is true that Communists, both Russian and native, have frequently taken advantage of existing maladjustments in this or that country to further the interests of Russia or of the local Communist party. And the fact that Russian Communists originally achieved a position of influence by underground activities which fostered conspiratorial tactics—tactics that in our day were found of great value by resistance movements operating against Nazi rule—has caused many Westerners, sometimes with justification, to fear “infiltration” and “boring from within.” It is entirely proper to inquire into the methods of the Communists and to ascertain whether they do or do not menace democratic institutions, and if they do, what measures should be taken to prevent the menace. This should be done, however, not out of blind panic, but with due consideration of conditions which, even if Communism did not exist, would still stir up ferment in many parts of the world, and of our own possible responsibility for the existence of these conditions. If we are to protect the house of democracy against sapping by “termites”—the phrase Arthur Koestler, a former Communist, once used about Nazism and more recently applied to Communism—we should concern ourselves, first of all, with seeing that it is built on sound foundations adequate, not to the circumstances of previous centuries, but of the century in which we live.

ROLE OF SOCIAL SCIENTIST. The conscious choice between existing alternatives advocated by General Marshall for China and applicable to other

countries requires us constantly to evaluate the admittedly confusing ideas and practices that are shaping our times. As long as we accept the tenets of tolerance which have hitherto been considered an integral part of democracy, we must permit all views to be heard. Not all views, however, have equal validity, and sooner or later the process of discussion, of weighing pros and cons, must lead to the point where conclusions are reached and decisions are taken. It is here that the social scientist has a role to play which is just as vital for the continued growth of civilization as that of the atomic scientist, the physician, or the industrial producer. But if he is to play this role effectively, he cannot content himself with mere presentation of “facts” on both sides of every question—a procedure which a distinguished American historian, the late Carl Becker, described as “the best substitute for ideas yet invented.” Objectivity is not, as sometimes assumed, abstention from judgment about competing values, but honest consideration of all available evidence by one who makes allowances for his possible prejudices before arriving at value judgments. Otherwise so-called objectivity could easily degenerate into intellectual nihilism, which is tantamount to betrayal of the function of the social scientist in a democratic society. As George H. Sabine, in interpreting Becker’s philosophy, has said: “Great history is the product of social crisis, an unavoidable aspect of intelligent social action because it is one means by which an age becomes conscious of what it is doing, in the light of what it has done and what it hopes to do.”

VERA MICHELES DEAN

MARSHALL REPORT FORECASTS REVIEW OF U.S. COURSE IN CHINA

General Marshall’s statement of January 7 on China marks the end of an important phase in our post-war relations with that country. The declaration is highly significant, not only because it implies that our policy of the past year has for the most part proved unsuccessful, but because it suggests, without giving definite details, the lines along which the United States may hereafter act in China. The main fact at the moment however, is that the methods used to implement this country’s China policy are on the point of being reconsidered.

MARSHALL’S VIEW OF CHINA. Few if any American diplomatic documents have dissected the politics of a non-enemy nation so bluntly as this one. General Marshall declares that the Chinese government contains “a dominant group of reactionaries who have been opposed, in my opinion, to almost every effort I have made to influence the formation of a genuine coalition government.” While noting that the reactionaries include both political and military leaders, he deplores “the domi-

nating influence of the military” within the Kuomintang, or official party, and asserts that government irreconcilables, “interested in the preservation of their own feudal control of China, evidently had no real intention of implementing” the Kuomintang-Communist agreements reached last year. While recognizing that the Chinese Communists are Marxists, he makes a distinction between “liberals” and radicals among them, expressing the personal opinion that “there is a definite liberal group . . . especially of young men who have turned to the Communists in disgust at the corruption evident in local government.” On the other hand, he is extremely critical of the Communist “radicals,” who “do not hesitate at the most drastic measures to gain their end,” and is particularly sharp in attacking Communist statements about American policy as “deliberate misrepresentation and abuse.” He also declares that the Communists’ recent course indicates “an unwillingness to make a fair compromise.”

From this analysis General Marshall draws two

main conclusions: that the political and military pacts which he helped to bring about failed because of "extremist elements" on both sides; and that "the salvation of the situation . . . would be the assumption of leadership by the liberals in the Government and in the minority parties, a splendid group of men, . . . under the leadership of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek." He characterizes the recently adopted Chinese constitution as "democratic," expresses regret at the unwillingness of the Communists to participate in drawing it up, and notes that the Central government is to be reorganized soon, pending elections which are to be followed by the enforcement of the constitution before the end of 1947. He then voices the hope that the door will remain open for the Communists, that liberals and non-Kuomintang members will receive adequate representation, and that the Central government will cease to give financial support to the Kuomintang.

U.S. POLICY CRUCIAL. Although the Marshall report places a welcome emphasis on the Chinese liberals, there are some matters which it passes over. First among these is the relationship between American policy and the failure of the Kuomintang-Communist negotiations. On this question General Marshall declares that "the reactionaries in the Government have evidently counted on substantial American support regardless of their actions"—a statement which throws light on the duality of American policy in China during the past year. On the one hand, the United States has pressed for unity and peace through inter-party agreements; on the other, it has extended valuable military and economic aid to the Central government, i.e., in effect, to its dominant reactionary wing. This policy did not offer an urgent incentive to peace for a regime which was, as General Marshall explains, inclined toward civil war.

In view of this situation, it appears that one of

the first problems involved in the readjustment of our China policy is to carry out the doctrine enunciated by President Truman on December 15, 1945, when he suggested that American support would be conditioned on the creation of a Chinese government which would embrace all groups, including the Communists, in fair and representative fashion. One of the implications of the Marshall report is that, while this all-inclusive government is still desirable, the government may nevertheless be able to democratize itself by admitting certain liberal elements, even though civil war continues. This immediately suggests a question: how can the reactionaries be weakened, as long as their policy of civil war is in force?

WHEN IS A CONSTITUTION DEMOCRATIC?

The second significant omission in General Marshall's statement lies in the gap between his pointed analysis of the Central government's shortcomings and his qualified expression of hope that Nanking will really establish democratic constitutional government. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek is mentioned only once, as a potential leader of the Chinese liberals, and there is no discussion of his past role in Chinese politics. Yet several points require elucidation. As the most important single figure in China, has he been a member of the dominant reactionary group described by General Marshall? If he has, is there reason to expect him to become a liberal leader? If he has not, why have the reactionaries been dominant? It would be helpful, in attempting to reconsider our policy on China, to have answers to these questions.

In this connection the faith in the Chinese government's constitutional intentions expressed by Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg in Cleveland on January 11 seems somewhat premature. In the thirty-five years since the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty, China has had several constitutions and constitutional drafts, most of which have been designed to put as fair a face as possible on oligarchical government. It would appear wise to place our emphasis not on words from China, but on the main reality of Chinese politics today—the continuing civil war. A negotiated settlement of that civil war remains the chief prerequisite for progress in China. Such a settlement may, of course, be impossible, but this cannot be considered certain until our conditional policy is really applied.

LAWRENCE K. ROSINGER

For a broad survey of the Chinese situation, including the background of General Marshall's report on China, read:

CHINA IN FERMENT
by Lawrence K. Rosinger

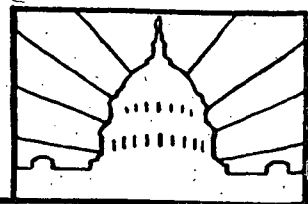
25 cents

January 1 issue of FOREIGN POLICY REPORTS
REPORTS are issued on the 1st and 15th of each month.
Subscription \$5; to F.P.A. members, \$4.

FOREIGN POLICY BULLETIN. Vol. XXVI, No. 14, JANUARY 17, 1947. Published weekly by the Foreign Policy Association, Incorporated. National Headquarters, 22 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y. FRANK ROSS MCCOY, *President Emeritus*; HELEN M. DAGGETT, *Executive Secretary*; VERA MICHELES DEAN, *Editor*. Entered as second-class matter December 2, 1921, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Four Dollars a Year. Please allow at least one month for change of address on membership publications.

F. P. A. Membership (which includes the Bulletin), Six Dollars a Year
Produced under union conditions and composed and printed by union labor.

Washington News Letter



WAY OPEN FOR INTEGRATION OF MILITARY AND FOREIGN POLICIES

The Secretary of State retains his traditional responsibility for the conduct of foreign policy, but he is today only one of many who participate in its making. Continuity or change in policy accordingly depends on the President as the final arbiter among policy makers. It would therefore be incorrect to assume that Mr. Truman's purpose in substituting General George C. Marshall for James F. Byrnes as Secretary of State on January 7 was to clear the way for a revision of foreign policy. The President could have obtained such a change with Mr. Byrnes in office. No evidence has come to light to refute Mr. Byrnes' own assertion that he resigned to safeguard his health.

TASKS FOR GENERAL MARSHALL. General Marshall faces difficult tasks at home as well as abroad. In his negotiations with other countries, he will be expected by the President to carry forward policies developed under Byrnes concerning the United Nations, atomic energy, trade, Europe (including the German settlement) and the Far East. He may urge the President to accept changes in policy toward China, along the lines of his January 7 statement, and toward Latin America, where he is said to favor a program—opposed by Byrnes—for arming the southern republics with weapons from the United States. Marshall's career in China and his dealings with our Allies during World War II have disclosed that he is a patient but forthright diplomat who, whatever may be his personal views, approaches problems with an open mind.

The foremost problem for Marshall, as it was for Byrnes, is how to deal with Russia. During the final period of his eighteen months in office the departing Secretary improved Russian-American relations by reaching agreement on the peace treaties with Italy and the Axis satellites and by laying the groundwork for the conference on the German settlement to be held in March. If the visit made by Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery to Moscow last week portends a conciliatory British policy toward Russia, Truman and Marshall may decide to follow part way. Marshall conferred twice during World War II with Stalin, at Teheran in 1943 and Yalta in 1945, and three times with Russian Foreign Minister Molotov, in Washington in 1942 and subsequently at Teheran and Yalta.

But, without some changes in domestic policy concerning military affairs, and in governmental administration in Washington, Marshall will be

helpless to conduct the sort of foreign policy Truman has hitherto encouraged through Byrnes. The State Department needs to be improved by the establishment of the type of staff system existing in the War Department and by bringing the various functional divisions of the State Department, political, economic, intelligence, and research, which now operate almost autonomously, into closer relationship with one another. The military background of General Marshall may make it possible to improve coordination between the State Department and the armed forces, which often propose steps in foreign policy without regard for the views of the State Department.

Since the Administration rightly regards American military strength as the foundation of its diplomatic strength, Truman and Marshall will seek extension of the existing draft law beyond its March 31 expiration date and enactment of a permanent universal military training act. "The basic needs of the army are not now being met by voluntary enlistments," Truman said in his State of the Union message to Congress on January 6. Marshall's prestige among members of the House and Senate improves the otherwise poor prospects for passage of a universal training act. Congress may approve President Truman's request for merger of the War and Navy Departments, and Senator Robert A. Taft, of Ohio, Chairman of the Republican Policy Committee in the Senate, indicated on January 9 that he would except military appropriations from his program of economies.

REACTION ABROAD. Marshall is favorably known abroad for his accomplishments during World War II, and his appointment was generally well received. Like some Americans, French and British commentators deprecated the fact that a military man has been appointed Secretary of State, but President Truman chose him for his personal abilities, not his military experience. Republican endorsement of Marshall was interpreted by the British government as a sign that the bipartisan character of United States foreign policy will survive Byrnes' departure. Friends of Italy were puzzled that Byrnes should resign the day after Premier de Gasperi arrived in Washington to confer with him, but realization of the paramount role played by the President in the making of American foreign policy should allay concern that a change might occur in our attitude toward Italy.

BLAIR BOLLES